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Strengthening Preventive Diplomacy and Multilateral Negotiation

Type:	Briefing
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Programme Area:	Peace Security and Diplomacy, , Peacemaking and Conflict Prevention, , Peacekeeping, , Multilateral Diplomacy, , International Law
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BACKGROUND

On 25 September 2015, Member States of the United Nations adopted the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the form of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These replace and build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) first crafted in 2000 as benchmarks for reducing poverty and multiple deprivations. The SDGs balance the economic, social and

environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

While tied most closely to SDG 16 on “Peace, justice and strong institutions”, preventive diplomacy and multilateral negotiation can be framed as tools to advance cross-cutting targets for all SDGs, especially those linked to structural causes and accelerators of conflict and violence, such as discrimination and inequality, and lack of equitable access to basic necessities and resources. It has been acknowledged that conflict prevention efforts are more effective and sustainable with the active engagement and participation of women (SDG 5: Gender Equality), and that the case of climate change can be addressed as a non-traditional security threat in its implications on resource management and climate-induced migration (SDG 13: Climate Change). In many ways, peace is critical for sustainable development endeavours, and economic, social and environmental development must be guaranteed to achieve durable peace. Finally, multilateral negotiation itself can be used as a governance mechanism by which governments and other stakeholders can skilfully navigate multilateral priorities and effectively coordinate action towards achieving the SDGs and other administrative goals.

Marshalling expertise from the United Nations system and from Columbia School of Law, the SDG-Fund and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) are partnering to implement a half-day briefing focused on applying expert knowledge in the areas of preventive diplomacy and multilateral negotiation to the attainment of the SDGs.

This briefing will initiate a longer-term reflection on the central relevance of preventive diplomacy and multilateral negotiation as tools that can be employed by diplomats, policy-makers, practitioners and researchers in their individual and collective efforts towards attaining the SDGs. This conversation will be pursued in Madrid during an International Conference on the same subject planned for 14 December 2017 (tbc). Focused on regional dispute settlement, the Madrid Conference will also draw in leaders of diplomatic training institutes so as to share their expertise and to ultimately incorporate within their respective diplomatic training curricula, preventive diplomacy and multilateral negotiation tools for the attainment of the SDGs.

EVENT OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Briefing in New York are to:

- Inform participants of the multiple connections between mechanisms of preventive diplomacy, multilateral negotiation, and the attainment of the SDGs;
- Equip participants with an introductory knowledge of the preventive diplomacy tools provided by global experts and high-level officials and representatives working in the fields of negotiation and multilateralism, international politics, and social, economic and environmental development;
- Provide participants with an understanding of how one might work to address structural causes of conflict and prevent disputes before they result in conflict, with the use of multilateral negotiation as the mechanism for negotiation and peaceful settlement;
- Present and investigate pertinent case studies on the obstacles relating to the implementation of specific goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, and ways in which preventive diplomacy intersects and contributes to the achievement of these targets; and
- Inform and/or prepare participants for the subject matter of preventive diplomacy and multilateral negotiation for the International Conference to take place in Madrid, Spain in December 2017.